

REMARKS ON THE GENUS ELASMOSTETHUS IN  
NORTH AMERICA

(Hemiptera, Pentatomidæ)

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Up to 1904, when E. P. Van Duzee published his "Annotated List of the Pentatomidæ Recorded from America North of Mexico" (Trans. Amer. Ent. Soc., XXX:1-80), there was known only one species, *Elasmostethus* (then termed *Acanthosoma*) *cruciatus* Say. In this paper, Van Duzee described one species, *atricornis*, and var. *cooleyi* of *cruciatus* Say.

There our knowledge of the American species of *Elasmostethus* rested until 1932, when H. G. Barber in his paper "Two Palearctic Hemiptera in the Nearctic Fauna" (Proc. Ent. Soc. Wash. XXXIV:65-66) synonymized Van Duzee's var. *cooleyi* with *E. interstinctus* Linné, based on specimens from the Mackenzie Delta received by J. R. Malloch from Owen Bryant. I have seen these specimens.

Van Duzee gives very little, other than color, to distinguish his variety, the structural characters falling within the limits of variability of *cruciatus*. There are in my collection two male specimens from Bryant named "var. *cooleyi*" by Barber. These answer to Van Duzee's characterization. There are also two females from the lot from Aklavik, identified as *E. interstinctus* by Barber and Malloch. This determination I have checked in the light of the European keys and descriptions (Fieber, Lameere, Saunders, etc) and by comparison with authoritatively determined European specimens (England, Bohemia, Spain). There are elusive differences, but the male genital segment in the American and the European specimens (by Barber's drawing) and the female segment from specimens from both regions are indistinguishable from each other in either sex, as between specimens. All, European and American, have the "row of black spots on either side of the venter, midway on segments 2 to 6" as stated by Barber.

However, the two specimens determined by Barber as "var. *cooleyi* V.D." have no such rows of black spots, but they agree with Van Duzee's description, *in which no mention is made of ventral black spots*. Now, since the characterization of the variety is but a *meticulous* color description, it is impossible that such a conspicuous color character should be overlooked;

in fact, Van Duzee categorically states: "Beneath pale yellowish *immaculate*" (Italics mine). Consequently, *Elasmostethus cruciatus* Say var. *cooleyi* Van Duzee clearly cannot be *E. interstinctus* L., and it stands as a smaller color variety as described.

On the other hand, *E. interstinctus* is obviously correctly interpreted and is found in America, as recorded.

The following brief key brings out the differences among the three North American species.

#### KEY TO SPECIES OF ELASMOSTETHUS

1. Antennæ piceous or shining black with the incisures pale (pronotal punctures fine, concolorous on the anterior part of the pronotum and a dark narrow series posteriorly); length, 9-10 mm., width, 5-5.5 mm.....*atricornis* V.D.
- . Antennæ pale, except for the more or less darker apical segment .....2
2. Pronotal punctures coarse, almost like foveoles, widely separated; venter *without* lateral rows of black spots, from ventral segment II to VI; length, 7-11 mm., width, 4.9-6 mm.....*cruciatus* Say (and var. *cooleyi* V.D.)
- . Pronotal punctures small, punctiform, fairly close together; ventral segments II to VI each with a lateral black spot on each side; length, 10.6 mm., width, 4.9 mm.....*interstinctus* Linné

#### VAN DYKE RETIREMENT

After twenty-five years of service with the University of California, Dr. Edwin Cooper Van Dyke retired on June 30, 1939, at the age of seventy years. As a tribute to his years of service as teacher, counselor, philosopher, and friend, a group of one hundred and twenty-five associates gathered at a banquet on Saturday evening, April 29, 1939, at the International House in Berkeley. Dr. W. B. Herms, chief of the division, presided as toastmaster and introduced the following speakers: Dr. S. B. Freeborn, Dr. R. C. Miller, Prof. E. O. Essig, Dr. J. H. Keen, Dr. E. G. Linsley, Mr. H. H. Keifer, and Mr. E. S. Ross. A bound volume of letters and telegrams received from hundreds of friends, far and near, was presented to Dr. Van Dyke and a silver bowl was presented to Mrs. Van Dyke.

Dr. Van Dyke retires as a true entomologist, molting into an instar of even greater activity and productivity unfettered by official duties. His library follows his collection to the California Academy of Sciences where he will carry on his work in the future. For the present and during the next year, however, Dr. and Mrs. Van Dyke are taking a long-anticipated field trip through the south Atlantic states.—R. L. Usinger.